This event has often been used as an illustration of the spiritual state of men & of the means used for their salvation. Had any man but a prophet gone to preach to dry bones, the enterprise would have been regarded not merely as hopeless, but as absurd. It may however without exaggeration be said that the task of those who preach to sinners without a divine message & a divine mission, is not less hopeless. If ye Hebrew prophet addressed himself to men long dead, such preachers address themselves to those whom the immutable law of God has already condemned to death. Without authority, to exhort such to live, is to exhort them to escape from the presence of the Omnipresent, from the power of the Omnipotent, or to change him who is unchangeable. If the Hebrew prophet addressed those who had no ears to hear, or power to obey; such teachers address those who are dead in trespasses & sin, who tho' they have ears they hear not, and are no more likely ~~that they will~~ to turn unto God alive, than ~~that~~ ye dead by their own power, ~~will~~ to leave their graves. Notwithstanding the hopelessness of this task, it is one, which men are constantly disposed to undertake. To secure the forgiveness of sin, & restoration to the favour of God may be said to be the great object to which the ~~[illegible]~~ mind of man hast ever been directed. The fact

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Rom. 1:16. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also the Greek.

When the Spirit led the prophet into the valley covered with bones exceeding dry, and commanded him to preach to them, it was to all appearance a hopeless task, yet as he preached, they lived, and stood up an exceeding great army. Not less hopeless to all appearance, and not less effectual, in fact, is the preaching of the gospel to those who are dead in trespasses and sin. If the Hebrew prophet addressed himself to men long dead; the Christian preacher must address those who are dead in law; those whom the righteous & consequently the immutable law of God, has already condemned. To an enlightened reason, unacquainted with ye gospel, the exhortation to such men to live, is equivalent to an exhortation to escape the power & presence of God, or to effect a change in him who is unchangeable ~~immutable~~. Men moreover are not only legally, but spiritually dead. They are as devoid of ~~spiritual~~ divine life, as the ~~dry~~ bone to which the prophet spoke, were devoid of animal life. ~~They are as~~ There is moreover as little ground of hope that they will of themselves arise and live, as that the dead will spontaneously leave their graves. It is n

a matter of wonder therefore that all the means of man's devising for the accomplishment of this object, have in all cases failed ~~& must forever fail~~. To rescue a sinner from the sentence of God's holy law, & to restore him to the favour of his maker, & to ~~re~~trace upon his soul the divine image, may be said to the object to which in all ages, the minds of all men have ~~been directed~~. The fact ~~that we have lost the favour of God~~, that we need forgiveness & ~~purific~~ renovation, is ~~too~~ deeply graven on ~~our~~ the common consciousness of men. ~~to escape the knowledge or acknowledgment of any set of men; and the necessity, importance of this fact is too obvious & too absorbing to allow it to be a matter of indifference~~. How a man can be just with God, and how a clean thing can be brought out of an unclean; in other words, how he is to escape the punishment due to him for sin, & how he is to be prepared for the presence of God, is the great problem to the solution of which all religions, all systems of philosophy, and all minds ~~much of human legislation~~, have ever been directed.

It may be said that this statement is much too strong, since there are many men who give themselves little concern about their relation to God, or their condition in a future world. Even if the fact were so, it would hardly require any modification in what has

just been said. The fact that there are many idiots in the world is no evidence that reason is not an attribute of our nature; neither is the unconcern of some men, any proof that the race as a race is not burdened with a sense of sin, and anxious for redemption. But the fact that unconcern exists to any great great extent may fairly be questioned. In many cases indifference is mere affectation; in more it is the effect of delusion as to what is necessary for their future well-being. ~~It is not that men~~ do not deny that they are sinners, but ~~it is that~~ they think pardon may be easily procured, and hence their apparent unconcern. The most irreligious men, have a religion of their own. They are irreligious because they reject the true religion, but they do homage to the truth by devising some scheme for accomplishing the very end, which the gospel is designed to effect. It is therefore as a general fact true that pardon & renovation are felt to be the great necessities of our fallen nature; and it is no less true that to meet these necessities has been the great subject of study since the apostacy of our race. To this end have the sacrifices, the ablutions, the prayers, the pilgrimages the penances, of all religions been directed. To effect the reunion of the soul with God has been the professed object of all philosophy. For this pur-

pose she has carried her flickering lamp into every dark recess in hopes of discovering some clue by which to guide her steps to peace & happiness. But the world by wisdom knew not God. The exhalations of an evil heart have ever dimmed or extinguished the glimmering light which burns in the human breast. Men professing themselves to be wise, became fools, & changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into the image of corruptible man, and of birds, & fourfooted beasts & creeping things, & worshipped & served the creature rather than the creator. The universe can hardly present to the eyes of angels a more gloomy spectacle than the race of man, conscious of its necessities, aware that it was not beyond the reach of mercy, yet ever trying some ineffectual means of restoration, & ever wandering farther from the truth.

There is no one fact more fully established by the history of the world, than the inefficacy of all the means devised by human wisdom to save the human soul. But what is impossible with men, is possible with God; what human wisdom has in vain attempted, that it is the peculiar province of the gospel to accomplish. It is the power of God unto salvation.

By power is of course meant the ability or efficiency for the production of a certain effect; and

the gospel is powerful in accomplishing the salvation of men. It is however the power of God. Its efficacy is derived from him. It is the means which he employs & which he renders effectual to that end.–

[As the attainment of eternal life is for every man the most important of all personal interests; and ~~the~~ promoting the salvation of others the most important of all social duties, it is absolutely necessary that we should understand & properly employ the means which God has ordained for this end. If we mistake the means, as thousands do, we shall certainly lose our own souls & minister to the perdition of our fellow men.]–

By the gospel of Christ we are to understand the the message of God ~~to man~~ concerning his purpose of saving men through Jesus Christ. It includes all the doctrines, promises & precepts communicated by Chr^t^ in reference to the plan of salvation. It is called the Gospel of God in reference to its author; the gospel of Christ, the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of the kingdom, & gospel of salvation in reference to its subject. It is therefore the revelation which God has made concerning his Son, his person, offices, work & kingdom, which is declared to ~~be~~ the ~~power of God~~ great and only efficacious means of salvation.

I. The truth of this declaration, might be established in various ways. It might be shown in the first place that natural religion, or that

knowledge of God & duty which men derive from the works of God & from the constitution of their own nature, is insufficient to lead them to discover any adequate means to secure either the forgiveness of sin or the renovation of the heart. This fact is expressly asserted in Scripture. Those who are destitute of the gospel, are declared to be without God, without hope, without a mediator, aliens & strangers. It is declared, that the world by wisdom knew not God; but on the contrary, through the vanity of their minds, they became blind to the manifestation of his eternal power & Godhead made in his works. The Scriptures also assert that the moral character of all who are left to their own guidance is corrupt; that the religion taught by the wisdom of man is ineffectual to purify the heart & regulate the life. They say with regard to all such there is none righteous no not one; there is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good no not one.

The truth of these declarations is abundantly confirmed by observation. It is a fact that beyond the limits enlightened by a revelation from God, no adequate knowledge of the divine character has ever been found among men; nor do we ever find that holiness of heart & life which he requires.

The same remarks may be made with regard to the insufficiency of human knowledge, of science or

philosophy, or in their application, of education to accomplish the salvation of men. This means has been variously tried in every age of the world, & always with the same disastrous result. Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. The wisdom of men is foolishness with God. The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain.

The same thing is true of the rites, ceremonies, the bodily exercises, with which men vainly endeavour to propitiate God, appease their conscience, or subdue their sins. These means have also been ~~too~~ tried & tried in vain, wherever men exist. –

But, in the second place, besides this negative proof, we have abundant positive evidence of the truth that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. We find the apostle expressly discarding reliance upon all other means for accomplishing the object of his mission. Christ sent him to preach the gospel. This he did simply, lest the Cross of Christ shd become of none effect; for it was the purpose of God thro' the foolishness of preaching to save those that believe. Though this means was despised by the Greeks & an offence to the Jews, he declared it to be the power of God & the wisdom of God, & he therefore determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ & him crucified. He placed his confidence in nothing but the Cross of Christ. He every where presented himself as a minister of the gospel declaring it to be his mission to preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. He uniformly

ascribes all his success in bringing men to God & holiness, not to any skill or wisdom of his own, but to the power of the gospel. He claims the Corinthians as his children, because he had begotten them through the gospel; he reminds them they received fr. him the gospel in which they stood & by which also they were saved. If that gospel was hid, it was only to those whose eyes the God of this world had blinded, lest its glorious light shd shine unto them. The Ephesians had been made fellow heirs & partakers of the promise of God by the gospel. He gives thanks that God had called the Thessalonians by the gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Saviour he says has abolished death & brought life & immortality to light through the gospel, of wh. I am made a preacher, an ~~minist~~ apostle, & a teacher of the Gentiles. He pronounces accursed any, even tho' an angel, who should preach any other gospel. Apostacy fr. ye gospel he declares to be a deadly sin, leaving the apostate in a condition in which he has nothing to expect but the judgment & fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. Hence the great anxiety of the apostles for the purity of the gospel; hence their exhortations to continue steadfast in the faith of the gospel; hence their indefatigable labours for its extension. In every possible way do they assert & teach that it was by the gospel & by the gospel alone that they hoped to be saved themselves, or to promote the salvation of others.

This doctrine of the Scripture that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, is abundantly

confirmed by the history of the world. The progress of the gospel is just as discernible as the progress of the sun. [There is as marked a difference between those places where the gospel is faithfully preached & those in which it is unknown as between day & night. Neither the fact nor the cause of the difference can be called into question.] Wherever the gospel is there is the knowledge of God; there is peace & sense of the divine favour; there is also holiness of heart & life. These effects always, to a greater or less extent, attend the preaching of the gospel. They decline when it declines, they disappear when it disappears; they revive when it revives.—

Were it possible millions of witnesses would arise to bear their individual testimony to the doctrine of the text; and I doubt not, many such witnesses can be found in this audience. Men who can say from their own experience that the gospel is indeed the power of God unto salvation; that it has delivered them who through all their life was subject to bondage; that it has given them peace with God & peace in their bosoms; that it has introduced them into the glorious liberty of the ~~children~~ sons of God, & enabled them to rejoice in hope of his glory; that it has subdued the power of Satan & given them in multitudes of cases the victory over sin, & is the source of all their spiritual strength & of all their hopes & joys.

II. The fact therefore that the gospel is thus efficacious in saving men, cannot be doubted. It may however be of use ~~to~~ inquire for a few minutes into the sources of its power.

1. It might be enough to say that it is a matter of divine appointment. This is the ultimate reason of the efficiency of any cause ~~for the production~~ of its effect. The will of God has determined that one event should produce another; and if ~~has~~ it has pleased him by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, or to make the gospel ~~powerful unto~~ the channel of his power in saving men, we have the most satisfactory solution of the question; as to the source of the efficacy of the gospel.

2. But as God adopts means ~~in their own nature~~ fitted to the end wh. they are intended to serve, it may be remarked further that the gospel is adapted to secure the salvation of men, because it, in the first place, reveals a righteousness suited to their necessities, ~~and available to their justification before God~~. This is the reason which the apostle himself assigns. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation because therein is revealed the righteousness of God. It is plain from other passages in his epistles that by "righteousness of God," he means a righteousness which is from God, which he gives, and which is available at his tribunal. It is opposed to our

own righteousness & declared to be his gift. The gospel therefore is effectual to salvation because it makes known, offers, and confers a righteousness which secures our justification & reconciliation with God. This is the grand source of its power, without which all other excellencies would be of ~~little~~ no avail. If it left us still under the curse of the law; if it disclosed no method by which we ~~could~~ can obtain the forgiveness of sins ~~restoration to the divine favour~~ it could not be effectual to the salvation of sinners. Its disclosures of the infinite holiness & justice of God; of the spirituality & extent of his law; of the necessity of perfect obedience in order to justification, would but ~~repel us from his presence &~~ drive us to despair. But revealing as it does a method by which God can be just & yet justify the ungodly, it is exactly suited to our necessities. The righteousness which it presents ~~for our acceptance~~ is absolutely perfect; ~~and~~ it meets & answers all the demands of the law ~~which we have broken~~; it, ~~therefore~~, fully satisfies the justice of God; it satisfies ~~& appeases~~ the demands of conscience; it satisfies all the interests of the moral government of God, and instead of endangering the welfare of ~~other~~ holy beings it in the highest degree exalts their blessedness by its display of the manifold grace & wisdom of God. It is with unspeakable delight that the sinner sensible of his guilt acquiesces in a plan of salvation which thus honours God

; which thus sustains the divine law, & which
, while it humbles & saves himself, ministers to the
blessedness of all holy beings. He sees that there is now
no reason why the believing sinner should be
punished. All the ends of punishment are an-
swered far more effectually by the atoning
righteousness of Christ, than they could ever
have been by his own perdition. Being justified
by faith he has peace with God, through the
Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall lay any thing to the
charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, who is
he that condemneth. It is Christ that died, yea
rather that has risen again, who is even at the
right hand of God, who also maketh intercession
for us. There is no condemnation to him that is
in Christ Jesus. To such a man there can be no
rational source of disquiet. God has forgiven him,
his Saviour ever lives to intercede for him, and
by that intercession to secure him from all fatal
evil & the enjoyment of all necessary good.

Here then is the first great necessity of the sin-
ner fully met & satisfied by the gospel. It secures
the full & final remission of his sins & restoration
to the favour of God. It is this that gives it its di-
vine power.

But in the second place, as we need sanctifica-
tion, no less than justification, the gospel to
be effectual to our salvation, must provide for
the former as well for the latter. And this it does

abundantly & effectually. It is according to the constitu-
tion of our nature that the favour of God should
itself produce holiness. His favour is the life of the
soul. Whatever therefore brings the soul into favour
with God, secures its sanctification. It involves a
contradiction to suppose that the divine Being
should be propitious towards a rational crea-
ture, communing ~~to it~~ with it in the fellow
ship of love, without that creature being made
a partaker of the divine nature. As the sun
calls from the bosom of the earth its fragrance ~~[illegible]~~
& beauties, so does the light of God's countenance,
call from all intelligent creatures the exercises
of holiness. If therefore the gospel by revealing a
righteousness which meets all the demands of God, se-
cures our reconciliation with our heavenly Father,
it does thereby secure ~~our~~ sanctification. You may
search the universe in vain ~~fall~~ for a single spirit living
in the enjoyment of the love of God, who is not ~~thereby~~
at the same time holy. This fact is true not owing to ~~be account~~
~~ed for, merely by saying that~~ because God loves none but the
holy; ~~this indeed is true~~, but because his love pro-
duces holiness. We love him because He first loved
us; is the causal relation asserted by the apostle
himself. Hence it is so important a part of the
office of the Holy Spirit to shed abroad the love of
God in the heart; to witness with our spirit that we
are the sons of God. This is what Paul teaches when he
says, that Xt being made under the law, redeemed those

who were under the law, that we might ~~be~~ receive
the adoption of sons, & because we are sons, i.e. reconciled
to God, he sends forth the Spirit of his Son into our
hearts crying Abba, Father; that is, assures us of the
divine favour, in order to produce in us the fil-
ial feelings of love, reverence, & desire to obey. The
love effect is like the oil of gladness on Aaron's head
that went down to the skirts of his garments; or as the
dew of Hermon, ~~the~~ or the dew that descended on the moun-
tains of Zion. — ~~The gospel therefore~~ It is by placing the soul
under the light of God's countenance, ~~does therefore~~ that the gospel secures
its sanctification.

But again it secures this ~~same~~ end by teaching the
true method of sanctification. It does not send ~~them~~ us to
the schools of the moral philosopher, to learn the means
of promoting virtue. The rules derived from ~~this~~ that source,
as far as they have any value, are themselves in-
cluded in the Scripture, but ~~at~~ such rules of them-
selves have never been effectual to the purification
of a single heart. They relate to ~~the regulation of the~~
external conduct, or to the government of the heart,
not to its regeneration. They tell us how to regulate
the principles of our fallen nature, but ~~give us~~ cannot
create new principles ~~no insight into the method by which~~ new princi-
ples are to be obtained. They can ~~tell~~ at best
heal the wounds of the soul slightly, ~~but~~ they cannot
reach the ~~root~~ seat & source of the evil. ~~Nor~~ Neither does
~~it~~ the gospel direct us to those means of improvement wh.
fanaticism in all ages has so zealously inculcated.
It does not prescribe retirement from the world; nor

make bodily pain a panacea for the diseases of the soul. All that is right & reasonable in this form of self discipline, it prescribes in requiring self denial, self control, & moderation in all things; but it ~~xxx xxx~~ neither drives us into asceticism, nor does it give the primary place, to what is at most a subordinate auxiliary to ~~holy living~~ holiness. Much less does it countenance those means of purification which superstition enjoins. It has no rites of mystic or magic influence. It has no sacred Ganges whose water cleanses ~~the soul~~. It has no holy places whose presence protect from sin. It has no formulas of incantation to expel the ~~evil~~ spirit of evil from the heart. It leads us to God; to the fountain which he has ~~of~~ opened for sin & uncleanness. It teaches us that the design of Christ's ~~work~~ & death was not only to secure pardon but purity; that he gave himself for his church that he might sanctify and cleanse it; that ~~it~~ he is not less our sanctification than our righteousness; that by acquiescing in the plan of salvation ~~which it proposes~~, we become interested in that covenant, the great design of which is to deliver us from all sin; that those who are in Christ Jesus are made partakers of his Spirit, which dwells in them, fashioning them ~~more & more into conformity to~~ after the image of God. It directs them, therefore, to apply to Christ by faith for strength & divine influence to enable them to resist sin, and to become holy. It warns them against grieving, quenching or resisting that Spirit which dwells in them

as in a temple. It assures them that in their own strength they can do nothing, but that through Xt ~~strengthen~~ they can do all things; & that our heavenly Father is more willing to give the H. S. to them that ask them than parents are to give food to their children. While it thus inculcates a simple reliance on the influence of the Spirit vouchsafed & promised by Christ, it at the same ~~the~~ time, enjoins the faithful discharge of all religious & social duties, & the assiduous use of all those means which God has appointed for our growth in grace. ~~Thus~~ The gospel is ~~therefore~~ the power of God unto salvation, because it teaches what human wisdom never could discover, the only true & effectual means of recovering the lost image of God, & of becoming prepared for the joys of his presence.

But again, the gospel is itself of all means the most effectual in promoting holiness. It not only teaches the way to holiness, but it is the source of it. We are born by the ~~the~~ truth, we are sanctified by the truth; our hope ~~alone~~ & faith all find their appropriate objects in the word of God. ~~this~~ It is the source of light ~~to direct our steps~~, of strength, of patience, of joy. It is the sword of the Spirit. By its exceeding great & precious promises we are made partakers of the divine nature.

With regard to this sanctifying power of the word of God there are different opinions. Some would refer it

all to the natural power of the truths which it reveals, & deny that there is any spiritual influence attending it. Others going to an opposite extreme, assign a magic influence to the word, ~~as t~~ analogous to that which they suppose to belong to water in baptism, & to y^e elements in the Eucharist. They assume that by the ordination of God the word has inherently ~~a~~ a supernatural power, distinct, on the one hand from its moral influence, ~~as truth~~, & on the other from the power of the Spirit ~~from the truth~~, by which it is accompanied. But though the Scriptures ascribe great efficacy to the word of God in sanctification, that power, is most properly referred either to its attributes as divine & authoritative truth, or to the energy of the H. S. who works with & by the truth upon our hearts.—

That the Holy Spirit does employ the truth in the regeneration, sanctification & consolation of his people is proved by the passage already referred, & is a familiar & admitted truth among Christians; ~~But~~ and as far as is known, he never operates on the mind, in his ordinary sanctifying influence, otherwise than with or through the truth. But besides this divine power which attends the ~~pure~~ word (wh. is really extrinsic to it) & which prepares the soul for its reception, there is in the word itself every thing which can give power to truth. There is a relation between the rational soul & truth, established by God, wh. makes the latter the appropriate food of the former; ~~And which~~ and hence the moral character of men is always determined by the system of opinions which

they really believe & with which their minds are in constant communion. This is the solution of the fact that error is always productive of evil, & that all truth ~~tends~~ tends to produce holiness. This being the case, the fact that the gospel reveals the highest, purest, and most important truths within the compass of human knowledge, must give it a power for good which belongs to no other means for the sanctification of men. There we have the sublime conception of God, a personal ~~infinite~~ a Spirit infinite, eternal & unchangeable in his being and perfections. There is nothing in the whole range of human con~~positions, ancient or modern~~ceptions, that can for one moment be compared ~~as to importance~~ with this single truth; ~~or which~~ either as to its importance or its power. It must enlarge, and purify, & govern every mind just in proportion as it is rightly apprehended & duly contemplated. The gospel moreover reveals the perfect character of Jesus Ct, combining in ~~one~~ mysterious & harmonious union all divine & human excellence. How many hearts has that character subdued & reclaimed; how many wavering minds has it fixed with confidence; into how many obedient ears has it ~~commanded~~ secured a ready access to the command, ye believe in God, believe also in me. To thousands and to millions it has been the resting place of faith and hope, when all things else seemed to be

driven from their moorings. The very last sentiment that dies in the heart of the reprobate is confidence in Christ; and y first step ~~toward [illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ of the sinner towards God ~~[illegible]~~ is reverence for the pure & holy Jesus; an assurance that all ~~that~~ he ~~has~~ said is true & that all he commands is right. Besides ~~all the~~ ~~sustaining, guiding & consoling~~ power which emanates from the character of the Saviour, we have in the Gospel the history of his work as our Redeemer, and an exhibition of the offices which he sustains towards us as our prophet, priest & king. Power of these truths arises partly from their inherent excellence ~~& importance~~ and partly from their ~~intimate~~ relation to ourselves. They are not only sublime exhibitions of ~~the~~ wisdom, love, ~~& power~~, such as angels gaze at with wonder, but they are exhibitions of wisdom, love & power exercised in our behalf, to recover us from sin & to bring us to the enjoyment of eternal life.

The Gospel moreover contains a perfect rule of duty. It is hard for us who have always been accustomed to this perfect exhibition of what is right in all our relations to God & our fellow creatures, to estimate the importance of the knowledge thus communicated. Contrast however the Christian code of morals, with that of any heathen nation, and the difference is seen to be immense. This perfect law not only concerns our outward conduct, but the ~~secret~~ ~~[illegible]~~ operations of the heart. Think therefore of the

light which it sheds not only without, but within. How it enlightens conscience, ~~[illegible]~~ and guides that mysterious power in ~~its~~ the exercise of its authority ~~[illegible]~~. How it reveals to us our own character & necessities, & forces us from inadequate ~~[illegible]~~ means of reformation & salvation. We had not known sin, but by the law. And the law is our school master to lead us to Christ. We are therefore in one important sense indebted to the law for our salvation, & to it the gospel owes much of its sanctifying power.

Again, the power of the gospel may be traced to ~~[illegible]~~ revelation which it makes of the destiny of man. It brings life & immortality to light. It shows us that we are not creatures of a day; that an endless track of existence lies before us. It discloses the whole spiritual world; the things not seen & eternal, of which we are ~~[illegible]~~ a part & with which we are in constant communion. Think of this in contrast with the Hindoo transmigration, from bird to beast, & from beast to reptile, or with the Mohammedan paradise of ~~[illegible]~~ sensual enjoyment ~~[illegible]~~. The wonder is that those who have the gospel, do not so live in heaven as to be entirely neglectful of the earth, & all that it contains.

If the truths contained in the gospel are of all others the best adapted to make us holy; so the motives which it presents to live to God are the highest & strongest that can operate on a

rational

beings. They are derived fr. the character of God & our relations to him; from the character of Xt & our indebtedness to him; from the largest views of what is right, & conducive to our well being throughout eternity. They flow from the commands, the promises & threatenings of God. They address themselves to all the innocent principles of our nature. They constrain by the power of love, by the authority of right, by the instinct of self regard.

Another consideration to wh. y^e power of y^e gospel is to be attributed, is its divine authority. It does not come to us with y^e faltering step & stammering tongue ~~of one delivering an uncertain message~~; nor does it speak as a man to his equals ~~man~~; but it is the voice of God ~~speaks as one having authority. It is not the word of man, but the word of God~~, declaring his own character & purposes, making known our duty & destiny; setting forth the way of life, & commanding us to walk in it. It penetrates ~~therefore in~~ the soul. It is sharper than a two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of y^e soul & sp^t. & of y^e joints & marrow & is a discerner of y^e thoughts & intents of the heart. It carries with it the evidence of its divine origin; making y^e wicked tremble with y^e certain looking for of judgment, & the saints rejoice in y^e assurance that y^e word of promise standeth sure. ~~It is easy to see that if the doctrines of the bible rested on the mere authority of man, if they were as uncertain as the teaching of y^e schools, they would be despoiled of their strength.~~ It is this certainty of truth which gives ~~them~~ power to the gospel over y^e heart, & authority over the conscience. Tho' heaven & earth pass away, one jot or tittle of y^e word of God shall not fail. The ~~eternal~~ truths wh. it reveals, the things not

seen & eternal, are in fact ~~the~~ realities, ~~compared to which~~ the external world is but a show; for the things that ~~do appear~~ are made are ~~all to be shaken~~ to be removed, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. The gospel therefore draws aside the veil which hides y^e^ substantial & eternal, & lets in upon us the power of the world to come. It is not a cunningly devised fable, but the word of God which liveth & abideth forever. The word of man reveals what is in man, & is y^e^ instrument by wh. he instructs & influences his fellow men; so y^e^ word of God reveals what is in God & is the instrument by which he instructs & moulds his people as he wills.—

When we think of these things; when we consider that y^e^ gospel reveals y^e^ righteousness of God ~~by which we are restored to y^e^ divine favour~~ for our justification, and by which we & obtain y^e^ adoption of sons; that it makes known a God who is reconciling y^e^ world unto himself not imputing unto men their trespasses; that it ~~for~~ points us to a fountain opened for sin & uncleanness, reveals the being & perfections of God, the character & offices of Xt, that it ~~makes~~ teaches plainly & with divine authority y^e^ rule of duty & y^e^ way of life, that it brings to bear upon us motives derived fr. y^e^ goodness, y^e^ authority & terrors of God, from y^e^ love of Xt, & y^e^ hope of heaven, it is indeed a wonder not that it is y^e^ power of God unto salvation to some, but that it does not wherever known at once transform all who hear it into the image of God; as in ~~at~~ the beginning our beautiful world rose responsive to y^e^ voice of its maker. ~~Of all proofs y^t^ that men are dead in sin, their insensibility to the gospel,~~ is surely ~~the~~ strongest.—

It would be endless to state y^e^ practical inferences wh. might legitimately be deduced from this subject. It may suffice to indicate a few & remember

1. If y^e^ gospel is y^e^ power of God unto salvation, then let the gospel be preserved pure. Do not adulterate it. Do not keep back its truths. Do not dare to substitute for it your figures of rhetoric, your metaphysical speculations, or your commandments of men. Let it be the gospel, simple & entire. There is power in nothing else. Beware of heresy. Remember what Paul said of those who pervert y^e^ gospel of Ch^t^. If we or an angel fr. heaven preach unto you any other gospel, let him be accursed. This anathema falls on all who so pervert the truth as to present some other ground of confidence towards God, than that which he has revealed in his word.

2. If y^e^ gospel is y^e^ power of God unto salvation, then in all our attempts to save men, our sole reliance must be, under God, upon the gospel. As y^e^ wisdom of men is foolishness with God, so the wisdom of God, is too apt to be regarded as foolishness by men. They are constantly

disposed therefore to substitute something for ye means which he has appointed for saving men. This tendency is so strong that even with ye Bible in ŧ hands we see men recommending first one scheme & then another, for the accomplishment of this object. [Some times it is ~~[illegible]~~ education, sometimes philosophy, ~~sometimes~~ external rites, ~~[illegible]~~ All these things are worthless, except so far as they are subordinate to the gospel & prepare the way for its reception.] If we wish to make men better, if we wish to correct their vices, to bring them to repentance, to restore them to God, we must use the means which he has put into our hands, and not rely upon those, however plausible, wh. men wd have us to adopt. —

3. If ye gospel is ye power of God to salvation, then it should be as extensive propagated as possible. If nothing else can save men, surely this only effectual means should not be withheld. How shall we answer it to God, if we knowing the power of the gospel, fail to do what in us lies, to make it known to our fellow men? Woe is me, said Paul, if I preach not ye gospel.

[4. Ministers of ye gospel fill an office of unspeakable importance & responsibility. To them is committed the instrumentality by wh. God saves men. If they are faithful, they may save themselves & those who hear them. If they are unfaithful, they destroy many souls. They are always a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. And who is sufficient for these things. It is a solemn thing to be put in trust with that on wh. the salvation of men depends. Though responsible, it is a delightful office to those who are content to be but earthen vessels to contain & bear about this divine treasure. It is a grace to be allowed to preach the

unsearchable riches of Xt, & to make all men see what is the fel-
lowship of the mystery, wh. fr. y beginning of y world had been hid in
God, but is now revealed unto his holy apostles & prophets by the
Spirit. 1

5. In seeking our own salvation let us remember that it is
attainable only by y gospel; that neither justification nor sanc-
tification can be secured or promoted except in the way
y word of God points out. Instead of going about to establish our
own righteousness we must submit to y righteousness of God.
Instead of attempting to live by our own strength, we must
allow Xt to live in us, & the life wh. we now live must
be by faith in the Son of God who loved us & gave himself
for us.

6. We see why it will be more tolerable in y day of judgment
for Tyre & Sidon, for Sodom & Gomorrah than for those who re-
ject the gospel. This is y condemnation, that light is come into
y world & men love darkness rather than light because their
deeds are evil. In the gospel every thing necessary for their salva-
tion is presented, offered & urged upon them; if they would
but accept it, it would be to them as effectual as it has been
to others. Over such Jesus wept, and said Oh that thou hadst
known in this thy day of thy visitation, the things wh. belong
unto thy peace, but now they are hidden from thine eyes.—

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Princeton Church July 28th 1844.
Chapel January 1st 1854.

Ps 19.3
Hymn 133